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Lattie, Bureau of Plant  
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KADDERLY:

Now we call to the microphone a Farm and Home Hour veteran..... Mr. W. R. Beattie, one of the Department's horticultural workers, himself a practical gardener, and acquainted with the gardening lore of various sections, and the new findings of the scientists who are trying to help growers of fruits and vegetables in solving their problems. What's the gardening news of the nation, Mr. Beattie?

BEATTIE:

Too large an order, Mr. Kadderly. I'd like to trim it down to news about the farm home vegetable garden for today at least.

KADDERLY:

Which is still quite a large order.

BEATTIE:

Indeed it is. You know the Bureau of Home Economics recently estimated the money value of foods produced on typical farms in different parts of the country.

KADDERLY:

Oh, yes. In connection with those surveys to find out what typical farm families produced at home and what they bought.

BEATTIE:

Yes, those are the studies I'm thinking of. Well, they placed the money value of foods produced on typical farms in the year 1936 at anywhere from \$200 to \$500 per farm.

KADDERLY:

A large part of which was accounted for by the output of the farm gardens, I understand.

BEATTIE:

Yes, a very large part, I've known many farm families who raise food worth from \$150 to \$250 in their home gardens. Every farmer listener will know of such instances in his own neighborhood.

KADDERLY:

Doubtless. And that brings to mind the forecasts made in the Farm Family Living Outlook Report issued last Fall by people from the Department and the State extension services. These forecasts indicated that because of probable lower prices for farm products the 1938 incomes of farm families might not be quite so great as in 1937.

(over)

BEATTIE:

And for that reason a good many farm families are planning ahead to cut expenses by producing as much as possible of the family food supply at home.

KADDERLY:

That's what brought the family living outlook to my mind.

BEATTIE:

My mail indicates that the predictions in the report are coming true.

KADDERLY:

How so?

BEATTIE:

More people are asking about new varieties and for information on improved methods of producing fruits and vegetables.

KADDERLY:

And what's your answer to these letters?

BEATTIE:

If there's a specific question we do our best to answer it. If the request is for general information we send Farmers' Bulletin No. 1673 on The Farm Garden. And in addition, suggest that the inquirers get in touch with their local county agent or write direct to the college of agriculture. You see the gardening methods are very different in different parts of the country.

KADDERLY:

Naturally. Gardens are growing right now on the farms of the Gulf Coast and the Southwest.

BEATTIE:

While the people in the North will have to wait two or three months before they can get started. But the seasonal differences aren't the only differences, as I said. From the practical experience of gardeners, and from the experiments of the scientists different methods of planting, fertilizing, cultivating, and pest control have grown up to fit the special conditions of each locality. And that's why I recommend that the farm families who want to get the most from their time and money put into the home garden get and use the information available from their own State colleges.

KADDERLY:

The extension horticulturists at the State colleges are acquainted with the new scientific results of the work at the other colleges and in the United States Department of Agriculture. We've been reporting to this audience some of the new things in the way of varieties of garden crops that resist diseases or give better yields or higher quality or all three.

BEATTIE:

You mean the reports in the 1937 Yearbook of Agriculture which sums up the progress made in the improvement of tomatoes, peppers, cabbage,



lettuce, sweet corn, watermelons, muskmelons, etc.

KADDERLY:

And don't forget the beans.

BEATTIE:

No, we shouldn't forget to mention the improvement of beans, which, by the way, was started by the seedsmen themselves over forty years ago. The most successful of these early plant breeders was Calvin N. Keeney of LeRoy, New York. He gave us a number of our best varieties of garden beans. The elimination of strings from the pods of green beans is no small achievement and has resulted in the production of better quality especially in canned beans to say nothing of the time it has saved housewives and cooks in preparing the meals for the family. In fact, people no longer speak of "string beans" for the modern is "snap beans."

KADDERLY:

And I understand that decided progress has been made by the scientists in the production of varieties that are resistant to mildew and other diseases.

BEATTIE:

That is true. The workers in the Department of Agriculture began breeding work in 1922 to produce varieties of beans resistant to the disease known as mosaic. This has been followed by work to secure varieties that are mildew resistant. It would require an hour to simply mention the many lines of activities that the Department scientists are engaged in with the objective of giving commercial growers and home gardeners better varieties. A good example is the mildew-resistant cantaloupe No. 45 which has about saved the cantaloupe industry of the Imperial Valley and other sections where early cantaloupes are grown.

KADDERLY:

And of course the scientists in the Bureau of Plant Industry are working along other lines besides variety improvement.

BEATTIE:

Yes, in fact, some new and very significant discoveries have recently been made about the plant food relations in the soil and the relation of soil bacteria and moisture to the ability of plants to absorb their food elements and use them in their growth. On looking over the annual reports not only of the Bureau of Plant Industry but those of other bureaus one is impressed with the amount of work that is being done and the information now available for our gardeners.

KADDERLY:

What, for example?

BEATTIE:

Well the Bureau of Agricultural Engineering has developed certain facts about how to manage small supplemental irrigation outfits for home gardeners and truck growers, also how the fertilizers can be placed to best advantage in order to get the greatest possible increase in yield

for each and every dollar spent for fertilizer. For some crops, potatoes, for example, the best results are secured where the fertilizer is placed in ribbons or bands on each side of the seed pieces. For other crops it may be in a band beneath the row or in bands near the surface.

KADDERLY:

And, these new findings are being reported to the extension folks in each State even before they are written up in our Department bulletins, are they not?

BEATTIE:

Yes, that's right. And the State extension specialists in horticulture and the county extension agents and the home demonstration agents are right on the job to give you the latest information on gardening methods. Several of the States have bulletins on home gardening and these bulletins are adapted to the best local practices in those particular States. Just as fast as the information is available we incorporate it in the Department bulletins, especially the Farmers' Bulletins summarizing briefly the methods of planting, fertilizing, cultivating and the control of plant diseases and insects.

KADDERLY:

What bulletins do you suggest?

BEATTIE:

For general information on the home garden we recommend Farmers' Bulletin No. 1673, The Farm Garden; also No. 1371, Diseases and Insects of Garden Vegetables. Any listeners who want either or both may send their requests to the U. S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C. And let me repeat that those who want the latest information on gardening get in touch with their State extension workers.